

SEPTEMBER, 1927

LOUISIANA - MISSISSIPPI  
SECTION

—OF—

Mathematical Association  
of America



There Should be a Thousand Members of the  
Mathematical Association of America  
in Mississippi and Louisiana.

**LOUISIANA-MISSISSIPPI SECTION,  
M. A. of A.**

S. T. SANDERS, *Chairman*,  
Baton Rouge, La.

P. K. SMITH, *Sec'y-Treas.*,  
Hattiesburg, Miss.

HAL FOX, *Vice-Chairman*,  
Starkville, Miss.

J. A. HARDIN, *Vice-Chairman*,  
Shreveport, La.

**LOUISIANA-MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS**

W. C. ROATEN, *Chairman*,  
DeRidder, La.

MISS IDA K. SMITH, *Vice-Chairman*,  
Meridian, Miss.

MRS. LONGMIRE, *Sec'y-Treas.*,  
Alexandria, La.

## **COOPERATING IN THE NAME OF MATHEMATICS**

The recent joint action of the La.-Miss. Section and the La.-Miss. branch of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics justifies the use of the News Letter in promoting the interests of both these organizations. The joint action alluded to—taken at the Shreveport meeting in March—provided for the utmost degree of cooperation between the college and the secondary teachers of mathematics in Mississippi and Louisiana. Speaking specifically, the two groups voted to have their annual meetings at the same time and in the same place, the programs to be joint to the extent that both secondary and college elements are to be featured.

Because of this formally voted cooperation, we are printing in this issue of the News Letter the list of officers of the Council branch for Louisiana-Mississippi territory.

### **TREASURER SMITH IN ACTION**

Pursuant of plans agreed upon in a conference held in Jackson, Mississippi, between Chairman Sanders, Sec'y-Treas. Smith and Professor Mitchell of Millsaps College, Mr. Smith has taken complete charge of the money end of our mathematical campaign. We print below his letter of appeal to the college and university presidents of our Section territory. He has already secured contributions from some of the administration heads and hope is entertained that all of them can be induced to furnish a measure of financial aid to the cause of mathematical expansion—a cause of the highest educational value.

### **ALL MATHEMATICAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE AIDS TO SCHOOL AND COLLEGE EFFICIENCY---WHY NOT FINANCIAL AID FROM SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES TO MATHEMATICAL ORGANIZATIONS ?**

1. Mathematics is a fundamental part of every high school, college and University curriculum.
2. Hence the mathematics teacher and mathematician are necessary to the schools and colleges.
3. The efficiency of the mathematics teacher and the mathematician, and hence, the efficiency of the mathematical departments of high schools, colleges and universities, are

vitality dependent on the activity of the Mathematical Association of America, the American Mathematical Society, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

4. But the burden of financing these organizations has in the past been on the shoulders of the individual mathematics teachers and mathematicians, and not on the high school, college, and university administrations.

5. If even half of this burden could be taken over by the schools and colleges, the outlook for increased efficiency in the profession of mathematics teaching would be immeasurably improved.

### MEMORANDUM

Membership in the Mathematical Association of America costs \$4.00 per year, plus an initiation fee of \$2.00. In case the applicant for membership is a high school teacher in Louisiana or Mississippi, the initiation fee, may, on the expressed desire of the teacher, be used to pay for one year's membership in the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Membership in the M. A. of A. carries with it a subscription to the *American Mathematical Monthly*. Membership in the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics carries with it a subscription to the *Mathematics Teacher*.

W. D. Cairns, Oberlin, Ohio, is the Secretary-Treasurer of the M. A. of A.

### WANTED FOR PUBLICATION IN THE NEWS LETTER: NEWS AND NOTES FROM COLLEGE AND SCHOOL MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENTS

The contents of the News Letter would be improved and its value as a stimulus to mathematical interest and activity increased, if material under the following heads could be furnished us from month to month.

(a) Names of mathematics teachers not already on our mailing lists.

(b) Names of mathematically interested individuals whether teachers or not, for addition to the mailing lists.

(c) Reports from college mathematics departments giving (1) the number of students electing advanced mathematical courses, (2) evidences of a growth of interest in mathe-

matics, (3) observations on the disciplinary values of mathematics (4) description of methods *successfully* tested out in the mathematics class room.

(d) (1) New solutions of old problems. (2) Problems offered for solution.

(e) Clippings of value from the mathematical journals.

(f) Letters suggesting ways and means for our campaign of mathematical expansion.

#### **THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE MEETS IN NASHVILLE, DECEMBER 26, 27, 28.**

A letter to Chairman Sanders from Professor H. E. Buchanan of Tulane University contains the following paragraph: "I wish to suggest that in your next News Letter you call attention to the Nashville meetings, December 26, 27, 28 of the Association for the Advancement of Science. Both the American Mathematical Society and Mathematical Association of America meet there too. It is the first time they have ever come that far South, and it is up to us (the South) to prove that they ought to come again."

Professor Buchanan is a member of the committee on arrangements for this meeting.

#### **ABOUT MATHEMATICS AND ITS TEACHING**

"Many circumstances operate to hinder the easy and full grasp of mathematics in its simplicity and certitude, not the least of which is the impossibility of adapting the instruction fully to the needs of every individual, and the serious difficulties which even a slight overtaxing of the powers of the individual may cause. But when any considerable proportion of the earnest pupils of a class are floundering along in an uncertainty verging on despair, the caution signal is flying clearly for the teacher. It behooves him, believing in the simplicity and certitude of mathematics himself, to ask himself whether he cannot, despite the restrictions consequent upon teaching many pupils at a time, make some modification in his mode of instruction which will help the majority, if not all, of the struggling pupils into the land of mathematical freedom. This is one of the chief problems, yes, the chief problem, confronting the thoughtful student of the teaching of mathematics.

*For mathematics properly studied, tends to strengthen, does strengthen the power of thinking independently and accurately."*—  
From J. W. A. Young's *The Teaching of Mathematics*.

"With respect to vitality and progressiveness it may be confidently said that mathematics is not surpassed by any branch of science. Its developments in our day proceed so rapidly and in so many directions that the ablest men, being unable to follow all the developments, are obliged to specialize within the general field. Ours is indeed the golden age of mathematics. Not less than eight international congresses of mathematicians were held prior to the World War. More than 500 scientific journals are devoted in part, and more than two score others are devoted exclusively, to mathematical publications. As many as 2,000 mathematical books and memoirs drop from the press in a single year. In all of the great culture nations are found flourishing mathematical societies. The American Mathematical Society, which is primarily devoted to research, and publishes two journals, has about one thousand members. The membership of the Mathematical Association of America, which publishes one journal, is still larger. And in our country, as in others, there are numerous organizations aiming at improvement in the teaching of elementary mathematics."—From C. J. Keyser's "Mathematics as a Career," as reprinted from *The Scientific Monthly*.

"In all the foregoing it is my contention that pupils in the junior high school grades can learn a great deal more mathematics than is commonly supposed to be the case. Whether teachers in general can teach as much mathematics as their pupils can learn is quite another question. I believe that they can. In order to do so they should become thoroughly familiar with the various subjects which they are to teach and then should go even further to gain the necessary background and perspective. All this they can do under adequate guidance. It is not fair, however, to expect a teacher to do this so long as she is responsible for the proper teaching of several other subjects, each of which doubtless has its own exacting demands if the pupils are to receive their due. If the former eighth grade teacher has a liking for mathematics and likes

to teach it, it would seem wise to encourage her to master this subject and to expect her to teach seventh and ninth grade classes in mathematics also, shifting some of her history or English classes to other teachers who prefer to teach those subjects and are glad to be relieved of mathematics. In this way the pupils would get better instruction in all subjects. This need not, and should not, mean as thorough departmentalization as obtains in the bigger senior high schools; for the pupil needs to be introduced gradually to a school so organized."—From a paper contributed by Ralph Beatley to *The Second Year Book* of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

### LETTERS

President \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Sir:

Mathematics is today a beautiful science in itself. It is especially to be recognized as an indispensable and dynamic instrument in the hands of the engineer, physicist and chemist.

Recently there has been organized in Mississippi and Louisiana a local section of the Mathematical Association of America. We are now sending out to the high school and college teachers of the two States a news letter of a few sheets. Through this letter we are attempting to attain a two-fold objective; first, more co-operation and understanding between college and high school mathematics in the two States; second, to create a greater interest in this basic science.

Our membership is limited at present and as a consequence we haven't enough funds to carry out our program. In time we feel that we shall be able to so interest such a large number of teachers of both classes that we shall be able to handle our financial problem. Our expense will be from five hundred to a thousand dollars depending upon the expansion of our news letter. In time we hope to expend this letter into a small magazine.

We, the officers and members of the Louisiana-Mississippi section of the Mathematical Association of America, feel that we have a real program of extension work on foot; a worthwhile program which will help the college and high school teachers of the two States. In helping the teachers to produce better results we feel that we shall be able to do real service. The presidents to whom we have appealed have contributed from \$15.00 to \$125.00. We should deeply appreciate your support. Especially we should appreciate your opinion of our efforts.

Please address me, Station B, Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Make out any checks to P. K. Smith.

Sincerely yours,

P. K. SMITH, *Sec'y-Treas.*,  
of the La.-Miss. Section Mathematical Asso. of Am.



STATE OF LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BATON ROUGE

September 9, 1927.

Professor S. T. Sanders, *Chairman*,  
Louisiana-Mississippi Mathematical Association,  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Dear Mr. Sanders:

We are living in an age of machinery. Both in the scale of activities and in their variety, no age can compare with the present.


That we may successfully carry on the gigantic enterprises of modern civilization imposes the necessity of increased facility and increased accuracy in our dealings with quantitative relations.

Those who take directions from the leaders must be able to use with ease and accuracy the well-known mathematical and quantitative means. The leaders themselves must be so equipped that they will be able to apply to the new projects and designs all that is known in regard to all branches of mathematics. It is fortunate that mathematicians themselves have recognized this need clearly enough to organize their forces for promoting the intensive study of mathematics in the high schools and colleges of the country.

Yours very truly,

J. E. LOMBARD,

Director of Certification.

  
The Franklin Printing Co.  
Baton Rouge, La.



